

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 01545 161613Z

60

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 EB-11 /129 W

----- 121764

R 161540Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0115

INFO PAN CANAL

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 1545

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PN

SUBJ: PRIVATE SECTOR - GOP TRUCE

REF: PANAMA 0342

SUMMARY. THE GOP AND ITS OPPONENTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR APPEAR TO HAVE DECIDED TO END AT LEAST TEMPARILY, THE CONFLICT WHICH ERUPTED BETWEEN THEM OVER THE ENACTMENT OF NEW HOUSING LAWS LAST OCTOBER. THE TRUCE RESULTED FROM COMPROMISE BY BOTH SIDES AND THE INITIATIVE OF THE GOP, WORKING THROUGH ITS SUPPORTERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, TO IMPROVE GOP-PRIVATE SECTOR RELATIONS. THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL APPROVED CHANGES IN THE HOUSING LAWS ON MARCH 12 AND THE GOP'S OPPONENTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAVE DISCLOSED PLANS TO SUPPORT THE GOP'S TREATY POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. IN AN INITIATIVE ENDORSED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER, THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (CONEP) IS PREPARING TO SEND TEAMS OF CONEP MEMBERS TO THE UNITED STATES IN AN EFFORT TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF AND SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S POSITION ON THE CANAL ISSUE. THE CONEP TEAMS PLAN TO APPEAR BEFORE BUSINESS GROUPS, UNIVERSITY AUDIENCES, CIVIC AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS. WHILE TRAVELLING UNOFFICIALLY, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PANAMA 01545 161613Z

THE CONEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE CURRENT TREATY

NEGOTIATIONS BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND WILL BE PROVIDED
WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION, COUNSEL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

2. ACCORDING TO A FEBRUARY 21 CONEP RESOLUTION - PUBLISHED MARCH
14 IN LOCAL PRESS - THE INITIATIVE COMES AS A RESULT OF THE
ORGANIZATION'S CONVICTION THAT PANAMA'S JUST ASPIRATIONS IN THE
NEGOTIATIONS HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN CONVEYED "OBJECTIVELY AND
DISPASSIONATELY" TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND ITS BELIEF THAT THE
PRIVATE AND INTELLECTUAL SECTORS OF U.S. OPINION WOULD BE MOST
RECEPTIVE TO A DIRECT AND UNOFFICIAL APPROACH FROM PRIVATE
PANAMANIANS. THE RESOLUTION PLEDGES CONEP TO COORDINATE ITS
EFFORTS WITH THE "PERTINENT ORGANS",
I.E., THE GOP, AND CHARACTERIZES THE UNDERTAKING AS A "PATRIOTIC
MISSION."

3. BACKGROUND AND COMMENT: THE CONEP DECISION TO
SUPPORT THE GOP'S TREATY POSITION AND TO SEND TEAMS TO THE
U.S. PUBLICLY SIGNALS A TRUCE BETWEEN CONEP AND THE GOP. THE
GOP-CONEP CONFLICT WHICH ERUPTED OVER THE PASSAGE OF NEW HOUSING
LAWS IN OCTOBER 1973 FLARED UP AGAIN IN JANUARY (SEE PANAMA
0342) WITH CONEP AND NATIONAL CIVIC MOVEMENT LEADERS SEEKING
TO BROADEN THEIR SUPPORT BY CHARGING THAT THE GOP WAS SACRIFICING
PANAMA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS.
THAT PARTICULAR GAMBIT HAD LITTLE IMPACT. HOWEVER, THE
GOP, BY WORKING THROUGH THE GROUP OF PRO-GOP YOUNG OLIGARCH
BUSINESSMEN, CONTINUED ITS EFFORTS TO CALM THE OPPOSITION.
ON FEBRUARY 5 TWO LEADERS OF THE GROUP TOOK FIVE OF THE
HARD-CORE LEADERS OF THE OPPOSITION, INCLUDING ROBERTO EISEN-
MAN, FREDERICO HUMBERT, JAIME ARIAS AND JUAN ARIAS, TO A
MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LAKAS DURING WHICH THEY AGREED TO DROP
THEIR TOTAL OPPOSITION TO THE GOP AND HENCEFORTH THEY WOULD
OFFER CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM AND, ON SOME ISSUES, COLLABORATION.
MEANWHILE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE GOP AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY CONTINUED. FINALLY, CHANGES WERE
APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MARCH 12
(BUT HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED) AND ON MARCH 14 THE CONEP
RESOLUTION WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED THREE WEEKS EARLIER WAS
RELEASED TO THE PRESS. AT A MINIMUM A TRUCE, AND POSSIBLY A
REAPPROACHMENT, HAS BEEN REACHED BY THE GOP AND CONEP.

DANIELS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PANAMA 01545 161613Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, POLITICAL STABILITY, PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, INTERNATIONAL CANALS, NEGOTIATIONS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PANAMA01545
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740337/aaaabipu.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PANAMA 0342
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 SEP 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <03 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIVATE SECTOR - GOP TRUCE
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PN, PANAMA CANAL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005